ture is a cold, underground place, very dark and full of shelves, on which are placed the coffins gilded and worked in a Louis Seize style: their effect is neither awful nor interesting, at least to those whose sentiment is dulled by tawdry fancy work—cold, dampness, and unpleasant odours: some of the numerous courts are not bad, and the general effect of the palace, from the heights above, with its angle turrets, centre cupola and entrance, is imposing and in good keeping with the dreary sterility of its site. The construction generally is that of simple repose: except the palace, there is nothing to tempt the traveller, and I was well satisfied after a day's observation, nor feel any desire to revisit it. I may add that the many frescoes here are very indifferent and utterly unsuited to the character of the building, being of the gaudiest colouring and the most confused composition.

The Toledo bridge, 385 feet long by 36 feet wide, is a florid, rather picturesque viaduct in abominable taste. Passing this you quickly enter the vast plain again, for Madrid has no suburbs: here, however, it is cultivated, and continues so through Castile and La Mancha to the Andalusian mountains. In La Mancha this vast table land takes its most remarkable form, stretching out in every direction; an immense flat prairie, covered then with ripe grain, few villages, and far between, no walls or hedges. There was nothing on the road to interest an architect, the chief features being dwelling-places cut in the rock—warm, they say in winter and cool in summer,—poverty, deformity, and desolation. To the stranger all this route offers much food for reflection. At last, after three days and two nights' fatiguing travel, we passed the grand defile of Jaen, and were refreshed with a sight of the splendid vega or plain of Andalusia, the distant city of Granada, and the still more distant Snowy mountains. It must be owned that Spain is the land of the unexpected: nothing can be more sudden than the change from La Mancha to Andalusia—from desolation to fertility—from abject poverty to jaunty dandyism—from oppressive solitude to the liveliness of a large city, and above all from the blank brick outside of the Alhambra walls, to the dream-like richness of the interior. I was, indeed, overpowered with delight: it more nearly approaches one's idea of a fairy-built palace than anything I ever saw. The fountains, the shoals of gold and silver fish, the sweet myrtle hedges, the fresh breeze, the bright sky, the inimitable courts—all combine to realise the most poetic fancy: here is nothing barbarous, but only proofs of the most refined and delicate taste, and of the highest artistic skill. One may well be excused for a little enthusiasm,—it is so beautiful, so novel, and so cool,—no slight charm in a hot, torrid mid-day. The beauty of the building consists, not only in its rich ornament, profuse and varied, but in its admirable adaptation to its purpose, and that harmony of Art with Nature, which the ancient Romans, as far as one can judge from Pompeii, had no idea of. In Pompeii we see no gardens, and miserable, cockney little fountains. The paintings are coarse—often disgusting, and the ornaments, though graceful at times, generally thin and straggling. Here, on the contrary, are the most delicious gardens and cooling fountains: the ornament is always good, generally beautiful, and often of such delicacy, compactness, and grace, that Raffaelle, in his best efforts, falls far short of it. The complicity of its mathematical forms delights the eye, and gives that exquisite pleasure in the perception of order in seeming confusion, of "concord in discord," such as the most intricate pieces of concerted music afford. It is, indeed, a triumph of art, ingenuity, and good taste, of which its bare exterior would give one no idea; and well has Ford remarked, that "the interior voluptuousness and splendour was masked, like the glittering spar in a coarse pebble."

The work generally is in stucco and wood, and all the ornament, contrary to Gothic use, seems applied. The stucco work is on brick walls, and about an inch and a half thick in all: it is fastened often to the wall with wooden pegs. The ornament itself is about half an inch deep, leaving thus an inch thickness of solid stucco. They were not particular about its face being perfectly flat, so that this thickness is sometimes more or less. Not unfrequently it is studded with raised flowers or geometric figures, but this not often, and never very projecting. The pattern on this stucco work stood out in white or gold, and the cuttings or channels formed a ground of blue or red. The plaster itself is hard, and close of texture, falls to the ground from any height without easily breaking, and takes a polish like marble. What are its ingredients? The honeycomb pendentive work is of plaster, generally. The ceilings in this style are certainly the most beautiful and extraordinary works of art one can imagine. Large cave-like hollows at times are worked in the domes, rendering them still more strange and fanciful: how this great weight is supported appears a mystery to me. No Gothic vaulting is so wonderful as this: it looks like a beautifully-worked and coloured stalactite grotto.

Alhambra means simply *the red*—probably from the deep rich red of the soil on which it is built. It was commenced in A.D. 1248, and finished about A.D. 1314. You enter, first, the Court of Myrtles, and nothing can be more surprising and delightful than the change from utter barrenness outside to such splendour within: it is like a noble soul in a plain man. The principal features of this court and others are the graceful colonnades.

The vestibule to the Hall of Ambassadors and the Hall itself are the most perfect for colour, though even here it requires a second look, and it may be remarked that both here and at the Generalife (another palace) the effect is totally independent of applied colour. The hall itself is a square room, with a honeycomb cornice and a domed roof: the walls are covered with effective, yet most delicate stucco work. The intricacy of the mosaic dado here is admirable: the roof is very dark, with large circles and stars of a subdued silvery white. The Court of Lions is surpassingly beautiful—light, not weak,—and in excellent taste: the projecting portions are square on plan, honeycombed out at angles, to receive a dark wooden circular dome. The Hall of the Two Sisters, the Queen's Room beyond, and the Hall of the Abencerrages opposite defy word painting: their roofs—the finest existing examples of honeycomb work—are truly wonderful, and are noble monuments of Arabic talent, manual skill, and geometric thought.

In this style, doors and windows are externally very plain, and this is the case generally with all exteriors, it is said, in order not to attract that bugbear of orientals and southerns—the evil eye. Mouldings throughout are very flat. Cornices are sometimes used externally, and are of a Byzantine character. The walls are, however, sometimes enriched a little, and are topped with projecting eaves, overshadowing a loggia of small, arched openings. The ornament and character appear to have no very fixed rules: here is the rule of good taste. Profuse ornament is by no means necessary: it may, as in other styles, be judiciously applied; and the architecture for modern use is capable of being assimilated to Byzantine. Columns with the super-imposed arch form one principal feature: in all the mouldings and real *architectural* features there is generally too much sameness: this may be altered, never forgetting the character of the style, however. Curves form its first principle, and I cannot help fancying that the crescent may have had some connection with this, since, though never actually introduced, as far as I have remarked, still the arches, the mouldings, and particularly the leaf foliage, contain something of its form. The outline of the brackets is generally weak and bad, nor do I like their being often double with the intermediate space filled in with honeycomb work. The cavetto, bead, and fillet, are the most usual mouldings, but never very prominent: bosses are constantly used, and form an important feature in all ornament. The round arch, pointed, and horseshoe or crescent are used apparently at will: small half-engaged columns supporting honeycomb work, and the interspaces filled up with letters and foliage, is a common wall decoration, but all the ornament may be applied when and where the artist judges most effective. The soffits of arches are generally filled in with complicated fretwork or foliage: when very wide, geometrical compartments, including writing, foliage, shields, and bosses, are common. The curve which enters so largely into leaf ornament is never continuous, but is characterised by sudden breaks and twists: this applies also to geometrical patterns, as in the tile work: this should never be lost sight of in designing, otherwise the work will become straggling, and one great charm of Arabic ornament is its compactness: indeed the excellent disposal of these constant stoppings best show the taste and talent of the decorator. Profuse ornament is by no means indispensable to the charm of Arabic architecture: its proportions are generally perfect, and this, as far as I could judge, rather from the practised and judicious eye of the architect than from any fixed rule. There is a court-yard of a private house in Granada, very good and little decorated, an architrave to arch in door, a sculptured cap to spring from, and bosses alone in spandrils. Sometimes in frets and mosaics there are centre pieces of a bit of foliage, a scrap of writing, or a shield: flat arches are often used with plain channelled voussoirs and worked key-stone: if the arch stones are ornamented then the channels are broader and ornamented as well. Shells, fruit, and flowers might well be introduced more than is usual: they *are* used but sparingly. The timbers of ceiling may be shown, worked on soffit and sides and supported against wall on brackets. As a man deprived of one sense becomes more acute in another, so the Moor, forbidden painting and sculpture, became more refined and perceptive in decoration, and applied to it all those feelings of grace and fancy which among other races is expended in various artistic studies. Architecture was the only art of the Moor: to him painting and sculpture did not exist: it was his only child, and became his delight and love. By this concentration of his powers, we can appreciate the intensity of his feelings, and it seems here most natural and most touching when, on the walls, we find the building addressed as a living thing: some of the artist's own soul was infused into the lifeless mass—not lifeless after that—and he speaks to it as a being which delights in his care and is proud of its splendour. Exceedingly musical indeed are some of the voices which whisper to the enchanted stranger: listen to that of the fountain,—Am I not lovely? it says. "To look at the basin you would imagine it to be a mass of solid ice, and the water to melt from it; yet it is impossible to say which of the two is really flowing. Seest thou not how the water from above flows on the surface, notwithstanding the current underneath strives to oppose its progress; like a lover, whose eyes are pregnant with tears, and who suppresses them from fear of an informer?" Another voice says, "Look attentively at my beauty, and thou wilt reap the benefit of a commentary on decoration." Another sings, "Praise be to God! delicately have the fingers of the artist embroidered my robe after setting the jewels of my diadem. People compare me to the throne of a bride." These are translations taken from Ford's excellent account of the place, and much did I regret my inability to read the original inscriptions with which the building abounds. It is not strange if my note-book is exclusively devoted to this wonder of beauty; yet there are many other excellent Moorish remains in the town—private houses, bazaar, baths, bridge—and indeed if not *all* Moorish, there is a Moorish character throughout the place. Some little way beyond the Alhambra is the Generalife, a summer palace, with lovely portions remaining; a garden, the perfection of nature and art; and a view, vast and beautiful. After having spent six weeks, most profitably and pleasantly, at the Alhambra, we set out on a mule journey to Cordova; but before going on, let me recommend the Inn de los Martires, at the Alhambra itself, as being well situated for the student, saving him a toilsome walk,

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